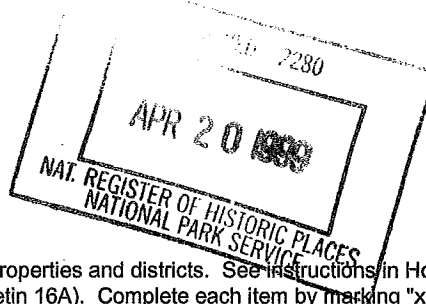


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort Smith National Cemetery

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 522 Garland Avenue and South 6th Street

☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Fort Smith

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas

code AR

county Sebastian

code 131

zip code 72901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination

☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property

☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant

☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Christy A. Sater
Signature of certifying official/Title

3-25-99
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Karen Rome Hupak Federal
Signature of commenting or other official/Title

4/15/99
Date

Department of Veterans Affairs

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
National Register

☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the National
Register

☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

5/20/99

Fort Smith National Cemetery
Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☒ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☐ district
☒ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
1	0	sites
3	2	structures
0	2	objects
5	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Victorian

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone

roof Metal

other Marble

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☒ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Military

Period of Significance

1867-1949

Significant Dates

1867

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☒ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository

Department of Veterans Affairs

Fort Smith National Cemetery
Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 21.7

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	15	370050	3916440
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	15	370350	3916430

3	15	370400	3916050
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	15	370190	3916070

☐ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Therese T. Sammartino, Staff Assistant, National Cemetery System

organization Department of Veterans Affairs date March 16, 1999

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone (202) 565-4895

city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20420

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Veterans Affairs

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone

city or town Washington, D.C. state zip code 20420

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION: (Continued)

MATERIALS:

Walls: Brick
Roof: Asphalt
Other: Iron

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Fort Smith National Cemetery is located at 522 Garland Avenue and South 6th Street, Fort Smith, Arkansas, in Sebastian County. It is located on the former military reservation of Fort Smith. When the national cemetery was established in 1867, it was an enlargement of the post cemetery and contained 5 ½ acres, enclosed by a white-washed sturdy fence. The grounds were laid off in sections intersected by walks six feet wide and were well provided with trees and shrubbery. The cemetery was subsequently enclosed by a brick wall with 18-inch cement coping and an average height of four feet, constructed circa 1874. In January 1898, the east end of the wall was blown down by a tornado and was rebuilt with stone with a 22-inch coping. A stone retaining wall on the northwest corner, 64 feet in length and 4 feet high, was constructed in 1904. By then, the stone wall enclosed nine acres and in 1942 was expanded to encompass the full 16 acres. The cemetery was later expanded to the southeast and now contains 21.7 acres. From the eastern corner of the newer burial area to the southeastern corner of the cemetery, the area is enclosed by ornamental iron fencing supported by stone columns. The southeast and southwest corners of the newer burial area are framed with 6-foot-high walls made of local stone, which is in keeping with the older walls on the site. Vinyl-clad chain link fencing with slats encloses the area from the southeast corner of Section 21 to the northwest corner of Section 17. The main entrance is situated in the northeast corner and is protected by double ornamental wrought-iron gates supported by concrete columns with granite bases and two side gates of the same material, all constructed in 1942. When these gates were constructed, the original iron gate was relocated to the southeast corner of Section 10. Upon completion of the newest burial sections, the original gate was restored and placed at the entrance to the committal service shelter between Sections 16 and 17 in the newer portion of the cemetery. There is a pedestrian gate on each side. A sign installed in 1997 outside and to the right of the main entrance, identifies the cemetery. From the main gate a drive leads to a circle, upon which is located the flagpole. The administration building, formerly the superintendent's lodge, and the maintenance building are located just north of the main entrance. A service gate is located on the east side of the cemetery.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 7 Page 2

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Graves were originally marked by stakes, which were later replaced with upright marble headstones. As of February 28, 1999, there were 8,738 sites used for the interment of 10,355 casketed remains and 296 sites used for the interment of 408 cremated remains. As of February 28, 1999, there were 2,829 gravesites available (124 reserved) for the interment of casketed remains and 1,186 sites available for the interment of cremated remains. The cemetery is expected to remain open until 2013 for the interment of casketed remains and until 2025 for the interment of cremated remains.

An inspector's report states that in 1871, there was a stone lodge containing three rooms which was situated outside the cemetery opposite the central part of the east boundary which was enclosed by a light wooden picket fence. On the night of January 11, 1898, a severe tornado at Fort Smith swept through the national cemetery and caused the destruction of the cemetery office and lodge, as well as many headstones and trees. The present lodge, now used as the administrative office, was constructed in 1904 and is a two-story brick structure with a stone foundation and asphalt shingle roof. A hip roof crowns the lodge's L-shaped two-story portion, while a lower hip roof covers a one-story portion. The windows, in addition to awnings, have heavy stone lintels and sills. The front porch was converted into a foyer (sometime after 1948).

The rectangular brick and concrete maintenance building with a four ply built-up flat roof was constructed in 1950. There are five storage bays, a shop area, staff restrooms, and public restroom facilities. In 1997, two bays were added and the restrooms were renovated.

The stone committal service shelter with a metal roof was constructed in 1997.

A carillon, located just to the east of the main entrance, was dedicated by the American Veterans of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam on November 11, 1986. A brick walkway leads to the carillon, and contains five plaques, four of which are inscribed with names of many persons and organizations that contributed monies towards the purchase of land for expansion of the cemetery. The fifth plaque is an appreciation plaque dedicated to all the contributors.

The numbers shown for contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

Buildings: Lodge

Sites: Cemetery

Structures: Main entrance gate, original entrance gate, perimeter wall

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas

Section number 7 & 8 Page 3

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The numbers shown for non-contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

Buildings: Utility building

Structures: Committal service shelter, service gate at east side of cemetery

Objects: Flagpole, carillon

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Fort Smith National Cemetery is significant under Criterion A and is an important component of the multiple property submission of Civil War Era National Cemeteries. It is significant under Criterion A because of its association with the Civil War. The cemetery is also significant beyond the Civil War era, as it includes the remains of veterans associated with many wars and all branches of service who had served their country throughout its history.

A variety of ways was considered to end the period of significance. Since the contributing resources were constructed many years ago, and a reasonable date could not be defined to end the period, the date of 1949 (50 years ago) was used.

Fort Smith was established in 1817 on a point of land a little below the junction of the Poteau and Arkansas Rivers. The site was selected by Major William Bradford pursuant to orders of General Andrew Jackson. The place designated was known as Belle Point, a name bestowed upon the area by French explorers because of its natural beauty. The fort was later named "Fort Smith" for Brigadier General Thomas A. Smith.

The first Fort Smith was abandoned in 1824 on orders of General Winfield Scott, the commanding officer of the Western Department of the Army at New Orleans. Pursuant to these orders, Colonel Mathew Arbuckle moved his five companies of troops from Fort Smith to a location at the mouth of the Verdigris River, Indian Territory (Oklahoma). This new location became Fort Gibson. One reason given for the move of this location was the great amount of sickness among the troops at Fort Smith. Records indicate that about twenty-five percent of the command at Fort Smith died during the year 1823 and were interred in the post cemetery there. Following the removal of troops from Fort Smith in April 1824, the stockade was unoccupied until late in March 1833. At that time, Captain John Stuart and Company C of the 7th U. S. Infantry were ordered to move from Fort Gibson to the

United States Department of the Interior
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas

Section number 8 Page 4

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

site of Fort Smith, where it was thought that they would be able to intercept shipments of whiskey brought up the river by traders for illegal sale to the Indians. Captain Stuart published a notice warning all masters and owners of boats transporting merchandise or other stores west of Fort Smith to stop at the landing there for examination of cargoes to assure that no liquor was being brought into the area for sale to the Indians. During the time that Captain Stuart and his men were stationed at Fort Smith, eight soldiers and one surgeon died and were interred in the post cemetery. On June 16, 1834, the troops were ordered out and stationed at a new and more healthful location on the south bank of the Arkansas River about ten miles above Fort Smith.

No more troops were stationed in the area until July 1838, when a new garrison called Cantonment Belknap, was established about a mile and a half northeast of Fort Smith. Shortly before the arrival of troops at Cantonment Belknap in June 1838, the United States Government purchased some 306 acres located southeast of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers. An area in the northwest corner of this property near the banks of the Arkansas River and slightly north and east of the first Fort Smith became the second Fort Smith. It is presumed that at some time between June 17, 1838, when Company F of the 7th U. S. States Infantry arrived at Camp Belknap, and September 17, 1842, when the second Fort Smith was occupied, the original post cemetery was rehabilitated and enlarged.

Although no great battles took place during the Civil War in the area about Fort Smith, there was considerable guerrilla or bushwhacking activity between Union and Confederate partisans. Arkansas, as a state, was a member of the Confederacy, but loyalties here on the northwestern frontier of the state frequently were divided even among members of the same family.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, this frontier outpost was garrisoned by two troops (approximately 150 men) of the 1st U. S. Cavalry under the command of Captain S. D. Sturgis. On April 23, 1861, twelve days after the surrender of Fort Sumter, South Carolina, two river steamers, the *Frederick Nortrebe* and the *Tahlequah* arrived at Van Buren from Little Rock with three hundred Confederates under the command of a Colonel Borland. This force disembarked at Van Buren and moved upon Fort Smith by dirt road. Captain Sturgis, alerted by scouting parties that the Confederate forces greatly outnumbered his troops, thereupon evacuated Fort Smith, and it was occupied by the Confederate forces. After the evacuation of Captain Sturgis, Confederate troops began to gather at Fort Smith. As early as May 20, 1861, Colonel DeRosa Carroll was in command of the Fort. Many Confederate organizations were organized here, but it is said that they were devoid of even the slightest knowledge of military training. This deficiency was overcome, however, through the exertions of several men living in the town who had formerly served in the regular army.

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 5

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

The State of Arkansas had not formally seceded from the Federal Union at the time of the evacuation of Fort Smith, but an ordinance of secession was passed on May 6, 1861. Shortly thereafter, the State of Arkansas conveyed to the Confederate States of America the lands, buildings, and other property at Fort Smith. This transfer included the post cemetery.

In the spring of 1863, Union General James G. Blunt had established a base at Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, with the intent of securing the Indian Territory for the Union. The Confederate commander in the Indian Territory was Brigadier General William Steele, whose forces consisted of Brigadier General Douglas Cooper's brigade and William Cabell's brigade. These forces were grouped at Honey Springs, some 30 miles south of Fort Gibson. Promised reinforcements from Texas had not yet arrived, defective powder rendered many of the Confederates' weapons ineffective, and many dispirited Rebel soldiers, most notably those in Cabell's Arkansas brigade, began to desert. To make matters worse, Steele received a report that another Federal column was advancing south toward Fort Smith from Springfield, Missouri. On August 19, Steele sent what remained of Cabell's brigade back to the vicinity of Fort Smith to guard against this new threat. On August 31, Cabell, determined to abandon Fort Smith, ordered his wagon trains to prepare to move to Jenny Lind, some ten miles south of the city. When Blunt's force crossed the Poteau on September 1 to attack Cabell's camp, they found it deserted. Blunt sent Colonel William Cloud with 1,500 cavalry, 6 pieces of artillery, and 40 wagons loaded with infantry to pursue him. Blunt and the remainder of his command entered Fort Smith without opposition. Around 9 a.m. on September 1, advance elements of Cloud's Cavalry attacked the Rebel's rear guard at Jenny Lind. Skirmishing continued until the Federals reached the foot of Devil's Backbone around noon. Fighting raged for nearly three hours. Cabell managed to hold enough of his command together to allow his wagons to get safely over the ridge. He listed his losses at 5 killed and 12 wounded. Cloud's Federals took possession of the ridge and spent the night there before returning to join their comrades in Fort Smith on September 2. They reported 14 casualties in the battle. Fort Smith's Unionists hailed Blunt's arrival. On September 9, Colonel Cloud moved out of Fort Smith.

The Federal forces found that capturing Fort Smith was easier than holding it. For the Confederacy, the loss of Fort Smith was another devastating blow, ending any real hope of capturing northwest Arkansas.

Fort Smith remained under control of the Confederacy until September 1, 1863, when Union troops under command of Colonel W. F. Cloud, 1st Kansas Cavalry, regained possession of the fort for the United States. They constructed about the town a system of defense consisting of five small forts, connected by rifle pits.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 6

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

As stated previously, there were no major battles fought in Fort Smith, although there was considerable bushwacking. On July 31, 1864, a considerable force of Confederate troops appeared about four miles south of Fort Smith and drove in Federal pickets. A brisk fire was kept up for some time by the skirmishers and the Confederates threw a number of shells from Howitzers. A part of the 2nd Kansas Battery under a Captain Smith promptly took position about a mile in advance of Fort No. 2, supported by two companies of the 1st Kansas Colored Troops, just in time to prevent the Confederates from occupying the same hill with their battery. The firing from Smith's guns was effective and killed a number of the enemy and all their battery horses except one. The Confederates then retired to the dense thickets of the Poteau bottoms, from whence they continued firing until the next day and then left. The Union loss was one killed, one wounded and one taken prisoner; Confederate losses not ascertained.

On September 1, the Federal pickets on the Texas Road were attacked by the Confederate forces consisting of about 300 Indians, and on September 28, a forage train belonging to the Federal Army supported by a portion of the 14th Kansas Cavalry, was attacked at a point 14 miles out on the Little Rock Road by a body of Indian guerillas. Eight men were killed and one was severely wounded. The remainder of the men were obliged to retire, leaving the wagons and dead soldiers.

According to the booklet titled "Fort Smith National Cemetery," there was a newspaper article on the subject of burial grounds in Fort Smith, in which Mr. W. J. Weaver stated that shortly after locating in Fort Smith in 1841, he visited a burying ground on the highest point on the east bank of the Poteau River, quite a distance above the stockade fort built by Major Bradford in 1817 and near where the Ketcham Iron Foundry was later erected. He says it was about 30 feet square and in a very dilapidated condition. It had been surrounded by a fence, very little of which was left, having been knocked down by cattle or rotted down. It contained a few graves, three of which were marked by marble slabs. One of the slabs was in memory of a surgeon, the other two marking the resting place of lieutenants. The unmarked graves were occupied by soldiers who had died in the hospital. He further states it is reasonable to conclude that the surgeon whose grave was marked by one of the marble slabs was Doctor Thomas Russell. Several other articles in newspaper clippings made reference to this small cemetery. One of them stated "Among the officers laid to rest here were Major William Bradford and Doctor Thomas Russell, as well as several missionaries who came to preach the gospel to the Indians." It is evident, therefore, that this was the first Post Cemetery and must have been established at the time of, or just prior to, the death of Surgeon Thomas Russell in 1819. Also, it is believed that this small cemetery was located within the area of what is now the national cemetery.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 7

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

The old post cemetery at Fort Smith did, in fact, become the Fort Smith National Cemetery in 1867. Patrick Hart, a Civil War veteran, who had served as a captain with the 15th Battery, New York Light Artillery, was appointed the first superintendent.

Legislation enacted February 24, 1871, provided for the disposition of certain useless military reservations by transfer from the War Department to the Department of the Interior, and that office would then offer the property for sale. The military reservation at Fort Smith was among the surplus properties slated for disposal, and transfer of the Fort Smith reservation was effected on March 25, 1871, as announced in War Department General Orders No. 19, dated March 6, 1871. In May 1871, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs advised Secretary of War William W. Belknap that a national military cemetery had been established on the Fort Smith reservation, and General Meigs requested that the national cemetery be excepted from the sale directed by Congress or, if that could not be done, that he be given instructions as to the means to be taken to protect the remains of the dead soldiers there interred. Correspondence concerning this matter then ensued between the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Interior Columbus Delano. The result was a brief Executive Order, signed by President Ulysses S. Grant on May 22, 1871, which removed the area occupied by the Fort Smith National Cemetery from sale to the Department of the Interior and restored it to the custody of the War Department.

By deed dated May 5, 1911, the Secretary of War transferred .26 acre to the City of Fort Smith as authorized by an Act of February 17, 1911 (36 Stat. 917). By deed dated March 31, 1936, a small triangular parcel of .13 acre in the northwest corner of the cemetery was conveyed to the Midland Valley Railroad Company. A metes and bounds description dated May 1, 1936, showed that the total acreage of the cemetery was 15.8 acres. In 1990, an additional 6.5 acres was acquired. The National Cemetery Acquisition Commission of Fort Smith had raised a portion of the funds to purchase the property, and the Department of Veterans Affairs provided funding to cover the remaining costs of the purchase. The total area of the cemetery is 22.3 acres.

During the period that Fort Smith was held by Confederate forces, many burials of Confederate soldiers were made in the post cemetery. Included among the dead interred at Fort Smith during the Civil War are the remains of two Confederate generals, graduates of West Point and veterans of many campaigns with the United States Army prior to their espousal of the principles of the Confederate States. One of these men, James B. McIntosh, graduated from West Point in 1849 and participated in numerous Indian campaigns in Texas and Kansas and was on duty at Fort Smith in May 1861, at which time he resigned his commission and joined the Army of the Confederacy. He gained the rank of colonel and participated in the Battle of Oak Hill, Missouri, on August 10, 1861. In 1862, Colonel

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 8

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

McIntosh was appointed a brigadier general and took part in the engagement at Pea Ridge, the first battle of the Civil War fought on Arkansas soil. During the second day of the battle, March 7, 1862, the 34-year-old general was killed, and his remains were brought to Fort Smith for burial. He is interred in grave 1267, Section 3, Row 4.

Alexander E. Steen, the other Confederate general who died during the Civil War, was also a West Point graduate and had served with distinction in the United States Army during the Mexican War. When the Civil War broke out, Steen was living in Arkansas. He cast his lot with the forces of the Confederacy and was disowned by his family in Missouri, who favored the Union cause. He followed his convictions, however, and became a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. A promising military career was terminated when General Steen was killed in action during the battle of Prairie Grove on December 7, 1862. He is buried in Grave 1822, Section 4, Row 2, in the Fort Smith National Cemetery.

Isaac C. Parker, a corporal in Company A, 61st Missouri Infantry, during the Civil War, is interred in Grave 4000, Section 9, Row 3. Parker's post war activities gained for him a reputation and a degree of recognition which extended beyond his wartime service. He was known as the "hanging judge." A lawyer by profession and a circuit judge in Missouri prior to the Civil War, Mr. Parker served two terms in Congress after the war. Then, in 1875, President Ulysses S. Grant appointed him United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas. The area within the jurisdiction of Judge Parker's court was for the most part frontier territory and included the Indian Territory, which was later to become the State of Oklahoma. Here during the last quarter of the nineteenth century in a typical frontier environment, the forces of law and order were in frequent conflict with those who considered themselves above the laws of the United States. Crimes of every description—murder, rape, larceny, robbery, cutting timber on Government lands, bootlegging, mail robbery, and other acts of defiance against duly constituted authority—were common. It is said that more than 13,000 cases came before Judge Parker's court during the twenty-one years that he presided as United States District Judge. Of the 12,000 criminal cases which came before him, there were 88 cases in which the penalty of death by hanging was upheld and carried out on a gallows erected near the United States Court House in Fort Smith. Judge Parker died on November 17, 1896, at the age of 58. Reports indicate that elaborate burial ceremonies were held, and that private and public business activity was suspended during the funeral services and that the flag was flown at half-staff. The Fort Smith National Cemetery was crowded with mourners who accompanied the body to its final resting place. A notable tribute of respect was a garland of wild flowers placed upon the grave by Chief Pleasant Porter of the Choctaw Indians.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 9

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Many of the United States Deputy Marshals who "rode" for Parker, performing their jobs of bringing criminals to justice with courage and daring, were also veterans of the Civil War and are buried in the national cemetery. Their names, along with their grave locations, are as follows:

NAME	SECTION	GRAVE
Anton Schuster	5	2657
James Anderson Johnson	5	2662
Floyd Wilson	5	2708
Randolph B. Creekmore	5	2724
Jacob Yoes	5	2811
James K. Pemberton	1	A350
Joseph Gramlich	1	369
Calvin Whitson	1	425
James W. Searle	6	3351

Christopher Duff, also a U. S. Deputy Marshal, is interred in a private cemetery.

The first known person to have been buried in what is now the national cemetery is Thomas Russell, Surgeon, U. S. Army. He accompanied the command of Major William Bradford in 1817, when the first Fort was constructed at Fort Smith and was Surgeon of the Fort. He died on August 24, 1819, and is buried in Section 2, Grave 605.

Major William Bradford, the first Commanding Officer of Fort Smith, is buried in Section 2, Grave 604. On May 5, 1813, while engaged in a battle at or near Fort Meigs, Michigan Territory, he received a gunshot wound in his left thigh. He was back at the head of his troops hobbling on a crutch before his wounds had sufficiently healed. He was promoted to Major in 1814. On December 25, 1817, he landed at the confluence of the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers in command of a company of riflemen. He established a log fort for the purpose of keeping peace between the native Osage and the Cherokee Indians who were moving from the east. This primitive frontier outpost became the present city of Fort Smith. He died on October 20, 1826, of yellow fever and was buried in the post cemetery which later became part of the national cemetery.

Another noteworthy burial was that of James McCann, an officer's steward on the USS *Powhatan* who served under the alias of James Lopinto. When he died on August 16, 1928, at the age of 115 years, he was the oldest man in Arkansas. He had served 53 years with the United States Navy. He is buried in Section 1, Grave 353.

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 8 Page 10

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

A monument in Section 9, Grave 3991, bears testimony to the military accomplishments of William O. Darby, known to many for his World War II exploits and as the organizer of the Rangers. Darby, a West Point graduate, patterned his Rangers after the British commandos. The courage and boldness of these Rangers earned Darby and themselves an enviable combat reputation for their very first campaign in Tunisia. Several battalions were added to the Ranger force and the entire organization took part in the Sicilian landings and campaigns. Only five days before Germany's surrender in 1945, Colonel Darby died in Italy's Po Valley. His courageous actions and military prowess were recognized by the Army, which posthumously raised him to the rank of brigadier general. Darby's remains were returned to his birthplace.

Also interred in the cemetery in Section 4, Grave 1926B, is General Richard Caswell Gatlin. On September 23, 1846, he was breveted a Major for meritorious conduct in the battle of Monterey, Mexico, where he was wounded storming the enemies works. In the late 1850s he was stationed at Fort Smith, where he served as the post commander. With the secession of his native state, he resigned his commission and accepted one as a Brigadier General of the Confederate Army. He retired to Fort Smith following the Civil War and died on September 8, 1896. His wife, Scioto, and infant son, Alfred, are buried in Grave 1926C. Scioto was in her 20's when she died a few days after giving birth to Alfred.

Fort Smith National Cemetery is also the burial place of two of its early superintendents:

William Dillon - Private, Company G, 2d New Hampshire Infantry, who became the second superintendent of Fort Smith National Cemetery in 1877. He served until 1884, and again from December 1902 to September 1930. Many of the large trees which now beautify the cemetery were planted during his long period of service. He died on November 17, 1930, and is interred in Grave 3876, Section 9, Row 2.

Richard G. Bulgin - Private, Company B, 15th New Jersey Infantry, who served as superintendent from 1885 until his death in December 1902. He is buried in Grave 3980A, Section 9, Row 2.

Some 473 members of the armies of the Confederacy are buried in this cemetery.

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Included among the graves of World War II decedents are five group burials. Burials of this nature were necessitated when circumstances of death were such that identification of individual remains for separate burials was not possible. The group burial sites mark the final resting place and commemorate the services of twenty-one members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, during World War II, made the supreme sacrifice in their nation's defense.

STRUCTURES DEMOLISHED

A brick stable, toolhouse, and public toilet, as well as an oil house, all constructed in 1902, were demolished when the maintenance building was completed in 1950.

An octagonal-shaped rostrum constructed circa 1904 of brick with a concrete floor was formerly located near the flagpole. There was an ornamental wrought-iron railing with eight wrought-iron risers with concrete caps. Originally, there was an ornamental wrought-iron Chinese pagoda type roof. Sometime in the 1950's it was removed, leaving only the base. The construction date was unknown, but it was estimated to be in the early 1900's. This rostrum was removed on September 9, 1963.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

National Cemetery System Microfilm Records

Department of Veterans Affairs Historic Preservation Office

Report of Inspector of the National Cemeteries of the United States for 1869

Report of the Inspector of the National Cemeteries for the years 1870 and 1871

Holt Dean W. American Military Cemeteries. North Carolina. McFarland and Company, Inc., 1992.

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number 9 & 10 Page 12

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Continued)

The Fort Smith National Cemetery, History of the United States National Cemetery and Military Occupation of Fort Smith, Arkansas. Prepared under the direction of The Quartermaster General, U. S. Army, January 1942.

Rugged and Sublime, The Civil War in Arkansas. The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville. 1994.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The National Cemetery Administration has used the existing boundaries of the cemetery.

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

Section number PHOTO Page 13

FORT SMITH NATIONAL CEMETERY
Sebastian County, Arkansas
Armando A. Sammartino, photographer
Date of Photographs: November 14, 1998

All negatives are stored with Technical Support Service (401B), National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420

VIEW OF: Sign outside main entrance, view
looking west
NEG. NO. 6774-33
PHOTO 1 of 24

VIEW OF: End of stone wall and start of chain
link fence, northwest corner of new burial area
NEG. NO. 6775-12
PHOTO 8 of 24

VIEW OF: Main entrance, view looking west
NEG. NO. 6774-32
PHOTO 2 of 24

VIEW OF: Southeast corner of new burial area
NEG. NO. 6775-15
PHOTO 9 of 24

VIEW OF: Original entrance gate at new burial
area
NEG. NO. 6775-
PHOTO 3 of 24

VIEW OF: Lodge, south elevation

NEG. NO. 6775-4
PHOTO 10 of 24

VIEW OF: Service gate
NEG. NO. 6775-16
PHOTO 4 of 24

VIEW OF: Lodge, west elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-5
PHOTO 11 of 24

VIEW OF: Flagpole, view looking west
NEG. NO. 6774-36A
PHOTO 5 of 24

VIEW OF: Lodge, north elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-7
PHOTO 12 of 24

VIEW OF: Perimeter wall, northwest corner
NEG. NO. 6775-10
PHOTO 6 of 24

VIEW OF: Lodge, east elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-2
PHOTO 13 of 24

VIEW OF: Iron fence south of main entrance
NEG. NO. 6774-34
PHOTO 7 of 24

VIEW OF: Utility building, west elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-6
PHOTO 14 of 24

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Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas**

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VIEW OF: Utility building, south elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-3
PHOTO 15 of 24

VIEW OF: Carillon
NEG. NO. 6774-36
PHOTO 20 of 24

VIEW OF: Committal service shelter, north
elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-20
PHOTO 16 of 24

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking northwest

NEG. NO. 6775-23
PHOTO 21 of 24

VIEW OF: Committal service shelter, east
elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-17
PHOTO 17 of 24

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west

NEG. NO. 6775-11
PHOTO 22 of 24

VIEW OF: Committal service shelter, south
elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-19
PHOTO 18 of 24

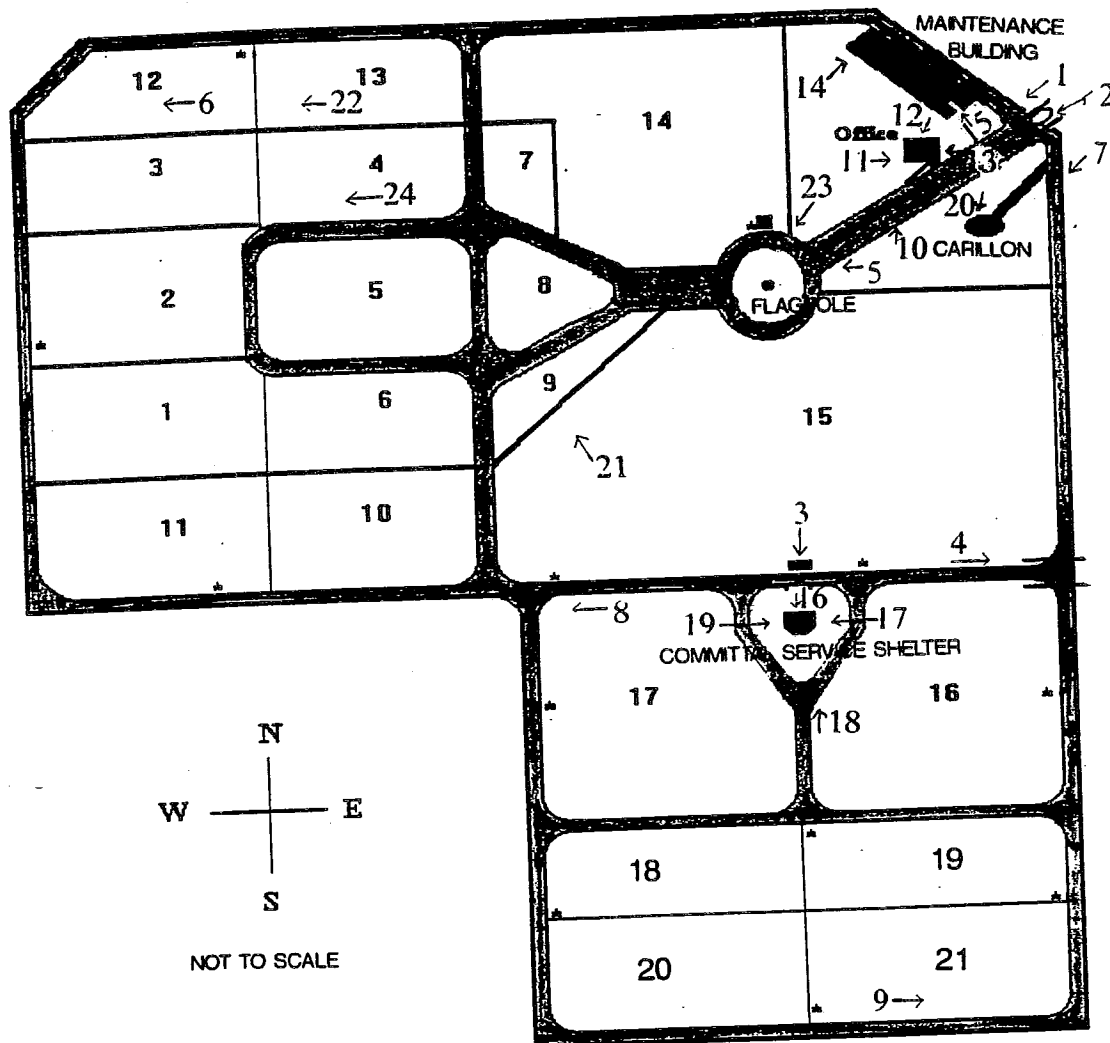
VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking southwest

NEG. NO. 6775-9
PHOTO 23 of 24

VIEW OF: Committal service shelter, west
elevation
NEG. NO. 6775-18
PHOTO 19 of 24

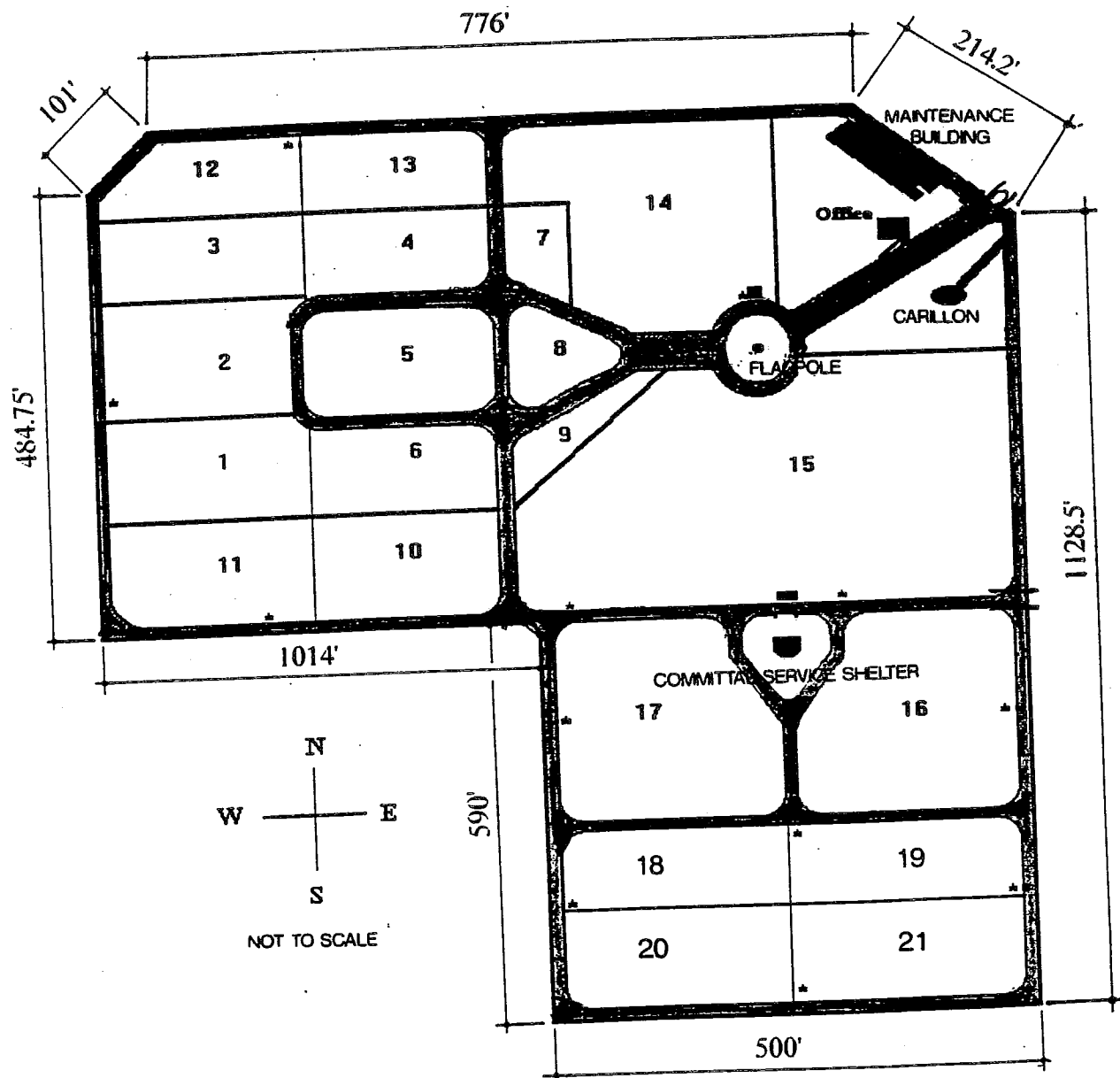
VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west

NEG. NO. 6775-24
PHOTO 24 of 24



Sketch Map
Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas

Note: Numbered arrows correspond to the views in the accompanying photographs



Base Map
Fort Smith National Cemetery
Sebastian County, Arkansas

E.O. 11593

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY NOTIFICATION

**National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service**

Name of property: *Fort Smith National Cemetery*

Location: *Sabastian County*

State: *AR*

Request submitted by: *VA/Gjore J. Mollenhoff*

Date received: *4-18-83*

Additional information received:

Opinion of the State Historic Preservation Officer:

☐ Eligible

☐ Not Eligible

☒ No Response

Comments:

The Secretary of the Interior has determined that this property is:

☒ Eligible

Applicable criteria: *A*

☐ Not Eligible

Comments: *The Fort Smith National Cemetery is eligible for the National Register for association with historic events. National Cemeteries are significant historically as an effort by the Federal Government to create memorials to those who have served the country in the military. In addition, National Cemeteries are associated with individuals who participated in events which, in the aggregate, have made significant contributions to American history.*

☐ Documentation insufficient

(Please see accompanying sheet explaining additional materials required)

for/ Patrick Andrews

Keeper of the National Register

Date: *6/2/83*